

Correspondents' Column.

P. H. CORNING, N. Y.—The Arrears of Pension law does not make any provision for an earlier commencement of pension to a dependent father, where the mother survived the soldier—as in your case—than from the termination of the right of the mother. The right of the mother terminated at her death, and as you have been allowed pension from the date of her death, you are not entitled under the Arrears law.

MRS. M. G. GYNTIANA, KY.—No pension has ever been provided for the brothers and sisters of soldiers or sailors who lost their lives in the service in any war in which the United States was engaged, prior to the war of 1861-5.

E. H. CORDESSPORT, PA.—The law does not provide a pension for the parents of a deceased soldier in cases where the latter left a widow or minor child surviving him. The widow's pension stopped under the provisions of law when she remarried, and her child's when the latter became sixteen years of age.

SAM'L P. SINKING SPRING, OHIO.—1. The sister of a soldier who died in the Army is entitled to a pension, provided (1) that the soldier left neither widow nor minor child surviving him; (2) that her mother and father were both dead before she attained the age of sixteen; and (3) that she was dependent, wholly or in part, on the soldier for support at the date of his death.

2. The daughter of a soldier who died after discharge, of a disability incurred in the service, and in line of duty, is entitled to a pension, if under sixteen years of age at the date of the father's death, her mother having died or remarried or been divorced. If her mother remain a widow, she (mother) would draw \$2 a month extra for her daughter until latter attained the age of sixteen.

3. The daughter can receive no allowance from the Government for nursing her father in his last illness.

4. If the father had a pension claim pending at the time of his death, and his daughter was over sixteen at the time, but bore the expenses of his last sickness and funeral, she can, by computing her father's claim, be reimbursed in the actual amount expended, notwithstanding the fact that she was over sixteen.

T. V. T. BELGRADE, MO.—There are "Soldiers' Homes" at Dayton, Ohio, Hampton, Va., and Milwaukee, Wis.; choose one of these, and then write to the Governor of the Home (you do not require his name) stating your case, and he will send you full instructions.

JNO. J. W. OSWEGO, N. Y.—Under the present law the pension of the widow of a soldier ceases when she remarries, and her name cannot be restored to the Pension Roll even if she again becomes a widow. A bill to restore to the Roll the names of widows dropped on account of remarriage, and who again become widows, has been introduced in Congress, but has not yet passed either Senate or House.

Mrs. H. A. C. PHILADELPHIA, MD.—Please send your real name to the editor of the Tribune.

E. O. WILMINGTON, DEL.—Survivors of the war of 1812, and of all other wars prior to the late war of the rebellion, are excluded from the benefits of the Arrears of Pension law. We know of no bill having been introduced, having for its object the inclusion of these classes in the Arrears law.

R. G. PLAINFIELD, CONN.—Q. Can a survivor of the war of 1812 draw a pension, and his wife, who lost a son in the late war, also draw one on account of the death of her son? A. The mother is entitled to a pension if "wholly or in part" dependent upon her son for support at the date of latter's death, notwithstanding the fact that her husband is in receipt of a pension.

"SUSSENER" G. L. CASSIDY, PA.—The fact of an ex-soldier being in receipt of a pension does not render him ineligible to become an inmate of a Soldiers' Home. Perhaps seventy-five per cent. of the inmates of these Homes are pensioners.

H. S. S. AMSTERDAM, N. Y.—An ex-soldier, upon entering one of the Homes for disabled volunteers, is required to surrender his regular pension during the period he may remain at the Home; but the Hon. Attorney-General has decided that the arrears of pension shall be paid to the pensioner and not to the Home.

H. C. B. ASBURY PARK, N. J.—My father died after applying for and before receiving his arrears of pension. Notice has come that his arrears claim is allowed. Q. Can I administer on his estate and draw his arrears? A. Without knowing how this point has been decided by the Commissioner of Pensions, or whether it has yet been decided, we venture the opinion that this arrears, having been allowed and become a part of your father's estate, is collectable by his legal heir or representative. You are advised to ask information from the United States Pension Agent.

—, RUD'S MILLS, WIS.—We are unable to inform you when you may look for an adjustment of your claim for increase of pension, filed September 13, 1879. From all we can gather very few pension claims are being allowed at present, and such has been the case for months past. In fact, the issuance of pension certificates appears now to be the exception rather than the rule.

G. A. S. ROCKLAND, MASS.—Your mother is entitled only to the pension allowed widows of enlisted men, because your father was an enlisted man when he incurred the disability which caused his death. He did not receive his commission until after he incurred the disability.

WM. V. BAINBRIDGE, OHIO.—The Equalization Bounty bill, which has been introduced in the Senate and referred to committee, proposes to grant \$8 1/4 a month for each month served, deducting the amount of United States bounty heretofore received. We are at a loss to understand why, if an enlisted man, you did not receive bounty for a service of over three years.

C. B. NORTHVILLE, N. Y.—Q. How is the daughter of a deceased soldier to recover bounty? She is sixteen years of age and married. A. Not being of legal age she was unable to apply through a legally appointed guardian. Her husband may take out letters of guardianship and collect.

"A SOLDIER," RONDOUT, N. Y.—The Equalization Bounty bill, recently introduced in Congress, proposes to grant eight and one-third (8 1/3) dollars a month bounty for each and every month of service, deducting all United States bounty heretofore received. If a soldier died in the service, his heirs (widow, children, parents,) would, under the provisions of said bill, receive an allowance of \$8 1/4 a month for each month of the term for which he enlisted, deducting the amount paid to the soldier and his heirs.

N. J. G. K. STOCKTON, GA.—You cannot purchase the right of any one to arrears of pension. No person can draw the arrears except the person entitled to the bounty under the law.

J. W. J. McLEANSBORO, ILL.—A soldier had been married twice before enlistment and died in the service, leaving a widow and three children, one of whom was by his first wife. Q. What rate of pension is the child by the first wife entitled to, the step-mother never having taken any care or control of, or in any manner contributed to its maintenance or education? A. If the child by first wife was under sixteen years of age when the father died it is entitled to receive \$2 a month from the 25th of July 1866, (provided the soldier died prior to that date,) until it did or does become sixteen.

F. P. BENNINGTON, KAS.—Q. Did our Representative from this (Third) District or either of our Senators vote for that essence of infamy known as the "Sixty Surgeon" bill? A. Senator Ingalls was one of its most active supporters and voted for it. Senator Plumb was absent when the vote was taken. The bill was not up in the House. It is understood that Senator Ingalls has been convinced of the injustice and impracticability of said measure and will antagonize it when it comes up for action at the approaching session of Congress.

J. W. K. ST. FRANCIS, MINN.—1. If you were discharged from your first enlistment by reason of a wound or injury in the nature of a wound, (which we infer was the case, else you would not have received the \$100 original bounty,) we are of opinion that, if your enlistment was for three years, you are entitled to the \$100 additional bounty; if for two years, to \$50 additional bounty. You were not entitled to the \$25 advance bounty received for second enlistment because discharged by reason of a disability which existed at enlistment. If we have stated your case correctly, the \$25 advance bounty (which the Paymaster should have deducted from your pay at final payment) will be deducted from any additional bounty which may be allowed you, thus leaving you \$75 or \$25, according to term of enlistment. 2. Arrears of pension will be paid upon your application for original pension now pending, provided same is allowed. 3. We are of opinion that the Pension Office would not answer your inquiry, as the receipt of evidence is not acknowledged.

THOS. J. S. VAILE, IOWA.—The Government furnishes headstones for the graves of all soldiers who died during or since the late war, upon application for same by relatives or friends. Address the Quartermaster-General of the Army, this city.

H. J. M. GARDEN, IOWA.—1. We do not know how the Commissioner of Pensions would construe the record to which refer, but we do know that he would require the testimony of one commissioned officer or two enlisted men of your command, who have personal knowledge, setting forth the time when, the place where, and the circumstances under which you incurred the disability. 2. The record would hardly show the degree of disability at time of discharge. The degree would most probably be determined from the testimony of physicians and neighbors who were cognizant of your physical condition on arrival home from the Army and thenceforward up to the date of your examination by the Pension Office surgeon.

E. B. HANNA, MO.—Q. Did not the Equalization Bounty bill once pass both Senate and House; and, if so, why is it not a law to-day? A. The bill did pass both Senate and House in 1876, but was vetoed by the President, and therefore did not become a law.

"SOLDIER'S HOMESTEADER," KAS.—H. A. came to this country with his father at the age of eight years. His father was naturalized. H. A. enlisted in the army during the late war and served three years. In 1876 he located a homestead. Q. Can he now make final proof and obtain a patent for his homestead? A. We do not see any obstacle to his making final proof. An ex-soldier is only required to remain upon and improve a homestead for such period as, added to his service in the army, would make five years. His father having been naturalized, naturalized the son; also, his service in the army of itself made him a citizen of the United States. He should apply to the Register or Receiver of the nearest Land-Office for instructions as to making final proof.

MRS. A. R. FAIRFIELD, MINN.—Your inquiry is answered in our reply to another correspondent in this column. See "Jno. J. W., Oswego, N. Y."

J. H. F. LITTLE VALLEY, N. Y.—I was pensioned from 1863 until 1872 at the rate of \$5 a month. In the latter-named year my pension was increased to \$18 a month. Q. Am I entitled to the difference between \$5 and \$18 from 1863 to 1872? A. Most certainly not. Eight dollars a month was the allowance for "total disability" until June 4, 1872, when it was increased to \$18 a month. No pensioner who has drawn from date of discharge has any title under the arrears law.

THOS. H. OXFORD, OHIO.—The children of the deceased soldier who now survive are entitled to receive \$8 a month pension jointly and \$2 a month each extra from the date of their mother's death (if she died after the soldier died) up to the time they respectively attained the age of sixteen. If the father died in service, (his wife being dead at the time) the children will draw \$8 a month from date of his death and \$2 each extra from July 25, 1866. Of course the children have no title unless under sixteen at date of father's death and he died in service or after discharge of disability contracted in the army.

THOS. H. OXFORD, OHIO.—1. The minor of Susan Hill, if under sixteen years of age when her mother died, can complete her mother's claim and draw her (the mother's) pension; but if over sixteen years of age when mother died, she is only entitled to the "accrued benefits." 2. The soldier having left a widow surviving him, the father has no title to pension. The fact of the widow's subsequent death does not give the father title. 3. The mother of a deceased pensioner is entitled from the date of his death until she dies or remarries, provided that the pensioner left neither widow or minor child surviving him; that she was "wholly or in part" dependent on her son for support at the time of his death, and that his death was due to a disability incurred while in the service and in the line of his duty as a soldier. 4. We are wholly uninforming as to the merits of your claim, but if you can furnish such proof as the Pension Office requires and are found, upon examination by the Pension Office surgeon, to be at least one-fourth disabled for manual labor, your case appears to be susceptible of successful prosecution. You should have heard from your claim long since and your attorney should have completed the evidence required within the period which has elapsed since filing your application. 5. We cannot furnish you with "a full military history of Alexander Thompson." The Government will not furnish any person not a United States official information upon which to base or sustain a claim. If the attorney to whom you refer is suspended or disbarred from practice before the Departments, the parties named should employ an attorney in good standing to continue the prosecution of their claims. We have numbered your inquiries to cover each case mentioned and have not answered your inquiries as numbered by yourself.

A. L. H. MT. HOLLY, N. J.—Apply to the surgeon in charge of the hospital for the desired information.

MRS. POLLY W. ALMA CITY, MINN.—The only heirs of deceased soldiers and sailors who are entitled to increase of pensions are widows who have children by the deceased soldier or sailor who were under sixteen years of age at his death and for whom \$2 a month extra has not been drawn from July 25, 1866, until they respectively attained or do attain that age. You are not entitled to arrears of pension, as you have drawn from date of soldier's death.

Holding the Fort.

A widow at Dort, in Holland, who was very industrious, was left by her husband, an eminent carpenter, with a comfortable house, some land, and two boats for carrying merchandise and passengers on the canals. She was also supposed to be worth about ten thousand guilders in ready money, which she employed in a hemp and sail cloth factory with a view to increasing her means and instructing her children in useful branches of business. One night in the year 1885, a person dressed in uniform and broadsword came to her house and requested lodging. "I let no lodgings, friend," said the widow; "and, besides, I have no spare bed, unless you were to sleep with my son, which I should think very improper, as you are a perfect stranger to us all."

The soldier then showed her his discharge, signed by the major, who gave him an excellent character, and also a passport from the governor of Breda. The widow believing the stranger to be an honest man called her son and asked him if he would accommodate a veteran who had served the republic thirty years with a share of his bed. The young man consented. The soldier was accordingly hospitably entertained, and at a seasonable hour retired to rest. Some hours afterwards, when all were quietly in their beds, they were startled by a loud knocking at the street door. The soldier being aroused, went softly down stairs and listened in the hall. The widow and her daughters, thoroughly alarmed, were rushing about from room to room screaming "murder!"

The son, with a pair of pistols, joined the soldier, who, having screwed on his bayonet and fresh primed his musket, stood awaiting the result. Scarcely had the women been warned to keep out of the way, when the door was forced in and two ruffians entered. They were both instantly shot dead by the son, who fired both his pistols at once. Two associates of the dead men returned the fire, but, owing to their surprise and confusion, without effect. At the same moment the soldier rushed upon them, ran one through the body with the bayonet, and as the other turned to escape, lodged the contents of his piece, which he had loaded with slugs, between the villain's shoulders, and he dropped dead on the spot.

The young man and the lodger then closed the door as well as they could, reloaded their weapons, made up a good fire and watched till daylight. When the work-people came next morning they were horrified to find four dead men on the dunghill adjoining the house, where the soldiers had dragged them before closing the door. The burgomaster and his syndie attended and took the depositions of the family about the affair. The bodies were buried at a cross-road, and a stone erected over their grave with a lengthy Latin inscription. The widow presented the soldier, who was upward of seventy years of age, with a sum equal to \$500, and the city settled a handsome pension on him for the rest of his life.

One of John Phoenix's Stories.

Out in a certain Western fort, some time ago, the major conceived that artillery must be used effectively in fighting the Indians by dispensing with gun-carriages and fastening the cannon upon the backs of mules. So he explained his views to the commandant, and it was determined to try the experiment. A howitzer was selected and strapped upon an ambulance mule, with the muzzle pointing toward the tail. When they had secured the gun and loaded it with ball and cartridge, they led the calm and steadfast mule out on the bluff and set up a target in the middle of the river to practice at. The rear of the mule was turned toward the target, and he was backed gently up to the edge of the bluff. The officers stood round in a semicircle, while the major went up and inserted a time fuse in the vent of the howitzer.

When the fuse was ready, the major lit it and retired. In a minute or two the hitherto unruffled mule heard the fizzing back on his neck, and it made him uneasy. He reached his head round to see what was going on, and as he did so his body turned, and the howitzer began to sweep around the horizon. The mule at last became excited, and his curiosity became more and more intense. In a second or two he was standing with his four legs in a bunch, making six revolutions per minute, and the howitzer threatening sudden death to every man within half a mile. The commandant was observed to climb suddenly up a tree; officers were seen sliding over the bluff into the river, as if they didn't care at all about the high price of uniforms; the adjutant made good time toward the fort; a sergeant began to throw up breastworks with his bayonet; the major rolled over and groaned. In a moment or two there was a puff of smoke, and a dull thud, and the mule—oh! where was he? A solitary brute might have been seen turning successfully back somersaults over the bluff, only to rest at another finally with his howitzer at the bottom of the river, while the ball went off toward the fort, hit the chimney in the major's quarters, rattling the adobe bricks down into the parlor, and frightening the major's wife into convulsions. They do not allude to it now, and no report of the result of the experiment was ever sent to the War Department.

The following is an exact copy of Mr. Bentley's Sixty Surgeon Bill:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Commissioner of Pensions shall divide the United States and Territories into such number of pension districts as he shall deem necessary, not exceeding sixty, and designate posts in each of said districts where the commission provided for by this act shall attend to make medical and surgical examinations, and to collect testimony in pension cases. Such posts shall be established at convenient places in each district; having regard to the distribution of population and the convenience of travel; and the commission shall attend at each of said posts at least once in each year, and wherever practicable a more frequent attendance shall be provided for. The designation of posts for each district, with the time of the attendance of the commission at each, shall be embodied in an order or orders of the Commissioner of Pensions, and published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the district. Whenever any change in the posts or the time of attendance thereof by the commission is made, it shall be published in the same manner.

Sec. 2. That one of the pension surgeons and one competent clerk, appointed to the Pension Office, be designated and detailed for the purpose by the Commissioner of Pensions, shall constitute a commission in each of said districts to make medical and surgical examinations authorized by the pension laws, and to collect the testimony in pension cases, under the direction of the Commissioner of Pensions, and in pursuance of rules and regulations prescribed by him. The pension surgeons and clerks who shall be detailed upon any such commission shall be authorized to administer oaths to claimants, their witnesses, and the pensioners who shall appear before them, or either of them, and they may proceed together or separately in the performance of their duties, as the Commissioner of Pensions shall direct. The testimony collected by the commission in the cases shall be reduced to writing, and subscribed and sworn to by the witnesses in presence of the commission, or some member thereof. When the claimant shall have produced all the proofs he desires to furnish, the same shall be forwarded to the Commissioner of Pensions for the settlement and adjustment of the claim. If it shall appear to the Commissioner of Pensions in any case that the attendance of a claimant or his witnesses before the commission is impossible, or would be an extreme hardship, the testimony may be taken or medical examination made in such other manner as the Commissioner of Pensions shall prescribe, but no additional expense to the government shall thereby be incurred. And when, in his opinion, the interests of the government requires it, or justice will better be subserved thereby, the Commissioner of Pensions may require not exceeding three of said pension surgeons to meet together for the purpose of making medical and surgical examinations of pensioners and claimants.

Sec. 3. That the Secretary of the Interior shall appoint to the Pension Office as many pension surgeons, who have had not less than five years' active experience in the practice of medicine and surgery, as shall be necessary to carry out the provisions of this act, not exceeding sixty in number, and, when practicable and not inconsistent with the interests of the service, surgeons who have had experience as Army or Navy Surgeons shall be appointed. Such surgeons shall hold their commissions at the pleasure of the Secretary of the Interior; and when any vacancy shall occur, by removal, death or resignation, or otherwise, the same may be filled by a new appointment. The salary of a pension surgeon shall be — dollars per annum.

Sec. 4. The Commissioner of Pensions shall cause to be examined by a surgeon, as often as once in two years, all invalid pensioners whose disabilities are liable to become of less degree than that for which the pension was allowed; and he may cause any invalid pensioner to be examined by a surgeon at such times and as often as he shall deem it for the interests of the government. If, upon the medical examination of any invalid pensioner, it shall appear that the disability on account of which his pension was allowed is less than the degree pensioned, the Commissioner shall readjust and re-rate the pension as justice may require. In rating pensions, the disability arising from simple ankylosis of the elbow shall be the standard of total disability, upon the basis of rank.

Sec. 5. If, after a pension has been allowed, the Commissioner of Pensions shall suspect that the same has been procured through fraud or misrepresentation, or for any other reason is of opinion that it ought not to continue, he may cause the payment thereof to be suspended, and on suspension he shall cause the case to be investigated by the members of the commission for that district, or by a clerk detailed to assist them; and if he shall suspect that a fraud upon the government has been perpetrated or is being attempted under the pension laws, he shall cause the same to be investigated by the commission of the proper district or a clerk detailed to their assistance.

Sec. 6. The surgeons and clerks employed under the provisions of this act shall be allowed, in addition to their salaries, their actual and necessary expenses, upon bills to be approved by the Commissioner of Pensions.